

Congress of the United States
U.S. House of Representatives
5th District Congressional Office
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Oklahoma City, OK 73112

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Ernest Istook

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Ernest Istook

Fifth District • Oklahoma

Report • Town Hall Schedule • Survey

Dear Friend,

There's a great opportunity for our future! Despite noisy wrangling, the agenda is far different in today's Washington, D.C. There's hope for expanding job opportunities, and relieving the tax loads on working Americans and their families. The White House wants different details, but now accepts the overall need.

Reducing the size and spending of the federal government is tougher. Some interest groups and politicians *still* claim we can enlarge their favorite programs, or start new ones, and still balance the budget.

Common-sense tells us otherwise. This is still a major challenge, but Oklahomans, and Americans are sensible. I listen as they tell me they're ready to make the tough choices to make a better future for our families. I'm ready too.

Your opinions count. Please attend one of the town hall meetings this month. They're an opportunity for you to be heard. And please fill out and mail back the opinion survey.

Thanks,

Ernest

This mailing was prepared, published & mailed at tax-payer expense.

FEBRUARY TOWN HALL MEETING SCHEDULE

MONDAY, FEBRUARY 17, 1997

Guthrie
Guthrie Public Library
201 N. Division
9:30 a.m.

Perry
Cherokee Strip Restaurant
I-35 and Highway 77
12:00 p.m.

Blackwell
Red Carpet Room - Chamber of Commerce
120 S. Main
3:00 p.m.

MONDAY, FEBRUARY 17, 1997

Ponca City
Municipal Court Room
200 E. Oklahoma
7:00 p.m.

TUESDAY, FEBRUARY 18, 1997

Bartlesville
Bartlesville Public Library-Large Conference Room
7:00 p.m.

WEDNESDAY, FEBRUARY 19, 1997

Warr Acres
Warr Acres Community Center
4301 N. Ann Arbor
1:00 p.m.

WEDNESDAY, FEBRUARY 19, 1997

Oklahoma City
Putnam City North High School
Little Theater - 11800 N. Rockwell
7:00 p.m.

THURSDAY, FEBRUARY 20, 1997

Edmond
American Legion Hall-106 East 5th (5th & Litter)
7:30 p.m.

FRIDAY, FEBRUARY 21, 1997

Yukon
Yukon City Council Room-12 South Fifth
10:00a.m.

Balancing The Budget

U.S. SENATE, HOUSE TO CONSIDER BALANCED BUDGET AMENDMENT

A landmark battle is taking place in Washington this month: should we balance the budget, or not! Next week, the Senate should consider a constitutional amendment to require just that. House consideration of the measure will quickly follow.

In the 104th Congress, the House overwhelmingly passed a similar Balanced Budget Amendment (BBA), but in the Senate it failed by one vote to receive the required 2/3 majority for passage.

The Federal Government: FY 1996

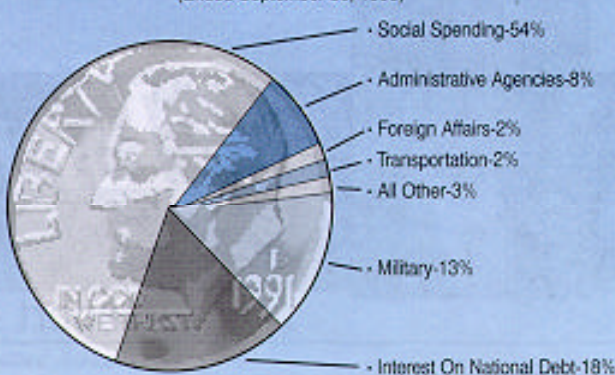
Total Expenses\$1.90 Trillion
Total Receipts\$1.80 Trillion
Deficit\$ 107 Billion

The need for a requirement to balance the budget was clearly demonstrated last year when the President vetoed a congressional plan to balance the budget, save Medicare from projected bankruptcy, and cut both taxes and spending.

Even with last year's success in cutting \$44 billion in wasteful Washington spending, and the elimination of over 300 programs, grants and agencies, the federal government is still too large, and the yearly deficits continue to add to the national debt, threatening the future for us and our families.

Many in Congress are pushing for a tax limitation provision to the BBA that would require a 2/3 "supermajority" before taxes could be raised. *This provision would help ensure that the budget would be balanced by cutting spending, not by raising taxes.*

Composition of Federal Spending, FY 1990
(Ended September 30, 1998)



A \$500 per child tax credit and capital gains tax reduction proposals will be re-introduced, and also proposals to abolish the income tax "marriage penalty". Proposals like these allow taxpayers to keep more of their own money, and thus will help promote economic growth.

Ways and Means Committee Chairman Bill Archer, is laying the groundwork for fundamental tax reform. The options are: 1) flat-tax and 2) consumption-based or national sales tax.

Also, an effort will be made to reform the Consumer Price Index (CPI) which now overstates inflation.

SERVICE ACADEMY APPLICATIONS

High school students interested in attending the Service Academies (Army, Navy, Air Force, Coast Guard, Merchant Marine), should contact Congressman Istook's Oklahoma City office (405) 942-3636. Applications for nomination will be accepted until November 15, 1997.

Deadline for Application:
November 15, 1997

The 105th Congress: An Update

Term Limits Amendment

House action is expected in early February to limit terms of all House and Senate members to 12 years. It will receive a majority, but the required two-thirds margin is questionable. *Istook supports term limits.*

Religious Freedom Amendment

Efforts on this amendment are making quiet but important progress. It would restore *voluntary* prayer in public schools. A vote is expected this year. *Istook is the lead sponsor in this effort.*

Welfare Reform

Last year Congress passed major welfare reform requiring work, responsibility and time limits on receiving welfare payments. It was vetoed twice, and then finally signed by the President. Congress will closely monitor implementation of these vital reforms, as we monitor how the states are handling this. *Istook supports the welfare reform package.*

Medicare

Last year Congress passed a plan to save Medicare from projected bankruptcy, which could come by the year 2002. It increased per-beneficiary benefits, and gave seniors more health care choices to use private health plans. Although the President vetoed this legislation, it will be re-introduced. *Istook continues to support reforms that will rescue Medicare from bankruptcy.*

Social Security

A variety of changes are proposed to avoid future insolvency (perhaps 15-20 years from now), but no clear consensus has emerged. Istook supports acting now to protect Social Security. Some propose letting individuals control how some of their social security money is invested - which means their guaranteed benefits would be lower.

Campaign Finance Reform

Several proposals include banning foreign money, limits on out-of-state contributions, limits on PAC money, increased reporting requirements, changes on campaign spending by non-candidates and by "independent" lobbying groups, and providing tax money or other "free" aid to candidates seeking federal office. *Istook favors most of these reforms, but opposes taxpayer funding of congressional campaigns.*

Smaller Government

Congress will continue the efforts to downsize the federal government. The 104th Congress cut \$44 billion in wasteful spending, and eliminated over 300 government programs, grants and agencies. But this year's effort to cut spending will be made more difficult by extra spending added late last year at President Clinton's insistence. *Istook supports the tough decisions needed to balance the budget.*

Indian Trust Lands

Congressional support, and support in many states, is increasing for Congressman Istook's amendment that would preserve the state and local tax base for schools, roads, public safety, etc., by not permitting evasion of sales tax, fuel tax, cigarette tax, etc. for *non-Indians* making purchases on federal tribal trust lands.

1996 SURVEY RESULTS

Nearly 17,500 Fifth District citizens responded to the 1996 survey.

1. Do you favor using additional federal and state tax dollars to reinstitute the AMTRAK passenger train system in Oklahoma?
yes 30%
no 60%
und 10%
2. Do you favor additional federal tax dollars to supplement the Bricktown/downtown Oklahoma City projects (MAPS)?
yes 13%
no 80%
und 7%
3. On federal tax reform, do you favor:
a.) Flat tax, no deduction, high exemptions?
25.5%
b.) Flat tax, with deductions for home mortgage and charity, but with lower personal exemptions?
40%
c.) National sales, or Value Added Tax?
20.5%
d.) Retain current tax system?
14%
4. On immigration:
a.) Temporary moratorium on legal immigration?
yes 76%
no 20%
und 4%
b.) Barriers across U.S.-Mexico border?
yes 57%
no 32%
und 11%
5. Is the President on the right track?
yes 19%
no 75%
und 6%
6. Is the Congress on the right track?
yes 48%
no 36%
und 16%

To Write To Congressman Istook

Write: 5400 N. Grand Blvd., Suite 505
Oklahoma City, OK 73112

E-Mail: Istook@Hr.House.Gov

Internet: <http://www.house.gov/istook/>



Congressman Ernest Istook

Fifth District Opinion Survey

Your input helps me better represent you in Washington. Please circle your answer, clip and keep the town meeting schedule, and mail the survey back to me. **Please enclose any additional comments in a letter.** Thank you!

(Y = Yes, N = No, U = Undecided)

(Two household members can use the same survey.)

		FIRST PERSON			SECOND PERSON			
		25%	50%	75%	25%	50%	75%	
		Other ____%			Other ____%			
1.	When Medicare was established, individual participants paid 50% of the premiums, and taxpayers paid 50%. Currently, participants pay 25%, and taxpayers pay 75%. What percent of Medicare premiums should be paid by the individual participants in the Medicare program?	1						
2.	Should taxpayers be able to invest for themselves some or all of the dollars they currently pay in Social Security taxes? (Under such a system, the guaranteed Social Security payment in later years would, of course, be less for those who select this option.)	2	Y	N	U	Y	N	U
3.	Do you support any of the following current tax proposals:							
a)	overall reduction in capital gains tax rate	3a	Y	N	U	Y	N	U
b)	reduction in capital gains tax rate only on sale of most homes	b	Y	N	U	Y	N	U
c)	temporary \$500 per child tax credit (Clinton proposal)	c	Y	N	U	Y	N	U
d)	permanent \$500 per child tax credit (Congressional proposal)	d	Y	N	U	Y	N	U
e)	larger tax credit targeted to families paying for children in college	e	Y	N	U	Y	N	U
f)	10% across-the-board cut in personal income tax	f	Y	N	U	Y	N	U
g)	no major tax cuts at this time	g	Y	N	U	Y	N	U
4.	In working to balance the federal budget, which of the following do you agree with:							
a)	step-by-step gradual reduction in spending	4a	Y	N	U	Y	N	U
b)	immediate, large reductions in spending	b	Y	N	U	Y	N	U
c)	make cuts now in defense; larger overall cuts in four or five years (Clinton plan)	c	Y	N	U	Y	N	U
d)	maintaining current programs is a higher priority than balancing the budget	d	Y	N	U	Y	N	U

Additional comments: _____

Your Opinion Counts. . . Please Return This Questionnaire Today

(Please Print)

From: _____

Place
32-cent
Stamp
Here

Congressman Ernest Istook
5400 N. Grand Blvd., Suite 505
Oklahoma City, OK 73112

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